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FROM

Ambassy HELSINKI

TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

REF

EmbDes No. 333, November 17, 1958

November 21, 1958

DATE

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For Dept.	EUR. S	N	150-4 Army of Navy 3 Ann. 006-1
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SUBJECT: Renewed Debate on Foreign Soviet Relations

After a relative lull, probably resulting from concentration on the Nordic Council Meeting in Oslo, press and public discussion of the Soviet campaign of passive pressure against the present Finnish Government was revived on November 18 with a new kind of editorial in Agrarian "Maakansa" (translation enclosed). The editorial was vaguely worded, but obviously sought to make the point that Finland could not afford to call the Soviet bluff, either because it might not be a bluff or because, even if the call succeeded, Finland would lose in terms of future Soviet confidence in its complete "neutrality" (read, pliability).

The other side of the argument was stated in a speech in Tampere on November 17 by Conservative Diet Member Tuure Junnila, only brief passages of which appeared in the Helsinki press (Finnish text forwarded separately to BNA and DEW):

"The question can no longer be examined only from the economic point of view. The question now concerns much greater values than economic ones. The question concerns no less than our right to decide what sort of a Cabinet we want to have in this country. Certainly we must stick to this right of ours even at the price of economic losses.

"To avoid all unnecessary irritation, but to remain strong and to prepare calmly for the difficulties of adjustment -- that is the line of action we ought to follow, if the present crisis in foreign policy cannot be settled. We shall overcome the crisis in due course, if the nerves of the present Government parties are strong enough. But this is the weakest point in the whole constellation at the moment. Everybody knows that the weakest link in the chain of the Government parties is the Agrarian Party.

"The great political question of today accordingly is whether the Agrarian Party can withstand this pressure, whether the party's new line which rejects plans for a people's front and with the help of which the present Cabinet was formed, or whether victory in the party will be won by those who more or less openly are trying to push the present Cabinet aside."

GCHilliker/mw
REPORTER

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Mr. [redacted] Editor-in-Chief, [redacted] tried to explain more specifically the position of the radical wing of the Agrarian Party in his "Honest-Politics" column on November 19.

With the party refusing to sit in the Cabinet, which does not seem to be able to handle our relations with the East, it -- they say -- "brings" our independence and our right of self-determination, as the parliament of 1935 was in "Honest-Politics's hands".

After articles that we ought to stand or fall for some particular Cabinet, the consequences of which unfortunately is such that if we really do not sit in our relations with the East, as they have been. Then again we ought not to correct the mistakes made in order to improve our relations with the East. In other words, we could deliberately be made our hands against the wall, not at that shift. It is correctness of the old saying, that politics means the art of the possible.

There seems to be real confusion in the matter. It is explained that the only alternative to the present Cabinet is a popular front Cabinet, after which the country might, perhaps, fall into the hands of the Communists.

With all this, the question is not one of a popular front Cabinet, and the question now is whether we present a of the extreme Left in the Cabinet at all.

Mr. [redacted] as just mentioned a Cabinet that would be able to handle our relations with the East in the same manner as the earlier Cabinets have been able to do for years.

With the Agrarian Cabinet is able to do that, let it remain in office. But if it just cannot get things going, it can hardly demand that we ought to back our head against the wall just because of some mistakes and an entirely composed Cabinet majority.

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Trans. Hollands

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For the Chief of Liaison

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Assistant Secretary of Defense

[Signature]

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

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[Signature]

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By: [illegible]

Summary transcription from "Helsinki" November 13, 1958

HOW MUCH WE CAN STAND?

up Finnish soldier corresponds to ten Americans - what must shall we do when the eleventh comes? (Quotation from V. A. Linna's Unknown Soldier)

The above quotation comes to mind when we follow the recent discussion of the status and development of Finnish foreign policy. It seems that the whole mood in political thinking of the Finnish people, and the representatives, are again springing up and that the question of our country's foreign policy position has come a summer's end and that once again we may be about to follow a stupid foreign policy program.

Some people say that it is only a question of standing firmly for about six to nine months, then the matter will be settled.

Recently this theory of the economic circles has been adopted by certain political groups. What will be clear is not explained. Have we can count until ten but if the eleventh comes . . .

Again there are long-voiced horses in the field, who speak about the unhealing, shuttles Flans and glance darkly around to service nation on those who try to spread some news in the group that is an such submission and cowardice.

During the past months a less praiseworthy chapter has been written in the Finnish political history. How long will this continue?

If old Paasilin, who tried to teach our people foreign political thinking, could listen to such discussion between some "geniuses", he would certainly turn in his grave and heave a deep, and sigh.

Translator: Mirja Easton

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